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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VI. REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Programme 34: Regional cooperation for development in Western Asia

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.
2. Regulation 3.11 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.
3. The revised programme 34, Regional cooperation for development in Western Asia, submitted below replaces the narrative of programme 34 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and subsequently revised by the Assembly in its resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and issued in document A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.
4. In keeping with the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-second session, 1/ which called for full revisions to programme 34, the narrative of programme 34 has been completely revised and the number of subprogrammes reduced from 15 to 5. The revisions emphasize a multidisciplinary thematic approach, which will necessitate, during implementation, the formation of task forces, led in each case by the major contributing organizational unit. This revised programme was reviewed by ESCWA at its seventeenth session, held from 29 to 31 May 1994.

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5. The revised text is presented below.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session,
Supplement No. 16 (A/47/16).

PROGRAMME 34. REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT IN
WESTERN ASIA

A. Programme

1. General orientation

34.1 The general mandate for the programme derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973 and 1985/69 of 26 July 1985, which established and amended the terms of reference of ESCWA.

34.2 The overall objective of the Commission is the improvement of the quality of life of the peoples of the region in all its aspects and its widest meaning. Improvements in the quality of life, in turn, enhance the ability of people to contribute further to overall economic and social development and to bring about a healthy human environment. Economic development cannot be divorced from the social and ecological, nor from the cultural and political dimensions. ESCWA, therefore, should direct its efforts to raising awareness of the importance of an integrated holistic systemic approach to development without losing sight of the specificities at the national and subregional levels. Stressing the interconnection of cultural, social, political, ecological and economic dimensions of development and change would provide the necessary components for sustainable development.

34.3 The programme will seek:

(a) To enhance sustainable development through the promotion of regional and subregional cooperation, with special emphasis on strengthening the coordination of policies and programmes leading to closer cooperation among ESCWA countries;

(b) To increase awareness of the social, cultural, ecological and technological dimensions of economic development and the interrelationships between social and economic factors in the development process;

(c) To provide opportunities for the acceleration of the process of sustainable development in each of the ESCWA member countries, with special emphasis on social and economic development of countries facing special conditions.

34.4 Most States members of the Commission depend, in varying degrees, on the production and export of crude oil for financing development. The sharp decline in oil prices throughout most of the 1980s, coupled with the war between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which lasted for most of that decade, has led to a decline in the financial resources available for development purposes and has had a negative spillover effect on other countries in the region in terms of reduced direct financial assistance flows and workers' remittances.

34.5 At the onset of the 1990s, the political instability in the ESCWA region was heightened by the incidence of crises and military conflict in the Persian

Gulf, with massive destruction of economic and social infrastructure, suspension of oil production and exports from two member countries, great losses in human life and suffering, disruption of trade channels and flows, non-voluntary waves of return migration and a substantial reduction in the flow of capital for investment within the region. All these point to the necessity to focus on social and economic rebuilding and rehabilitation, the ultimate objective being the reintegration of the population into peaceful and gainful ways of living.

34.6 The social cost of the above-mentioned development has been enormous, as reflected in deteriorating standards of living, unemployment, poverty, social disintegration, refugees, returnees, marginalization of large segments of the population and higher disability rates, thus compounding the problems associated with social adjustment to changes in traditional norms and codes in the region. This high social cost of events has left a clear mark on the lives of the people in the region, on the communities at large and on institutions.

34.7 As the ESCWA region approaches the twenty-first century, it is faced with several other complex challenges that require both creative and effective ways of dealing with them. One of these challenges is in the area of natural resources, the main problem being inadequacy of planning and management of its water, energy and mineral resources. The tasks confronting member States in addressing this situation are complicated by a shortage of water resources, uneven distribution of energy sources and a lack of articulated national and regional strategies for balancing environmental concerns and natural resource development and exploitation.

34.8 Similarly, the food security situation in the region is precarious owing to a weak agricultural sector. This is due to a considerable extent, to water scarcity, degradation of the natural resource base, inadequate physical and social infrastructure, low technological levels and the largely unfavourable socio-economic environment in which agricultural activity is carried out. Given the aridity of the region, conservation and the rational use of water become issues of extreme importance.

34.9 Notwithstanding the above elements and their negative consequences for the quality of life of the population of the region, the production sector in the more diversified economies has languished over the years. Thus the share of domestic output in meeting local demand for manufactured goods has decreased over the last decade.

34.10 The economies of the countries of the region are also characterized by a high degree of dependence on, and sensitivity to, changes in the global economy. The emergence and/or consolidation and enlargement of regional economic blocs, such as the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement, coupled with the further liberalization of international trade in goods and services under the recently concluded Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, will further affect development prospects in virtually all sectors and leave lasting negative effects on socio-economic conditions in the region.

34.11 The development of both the industrial and agricultural sectors is closely linked with international trade through the heavy dependence of those sectors on the outside world for virtually all their needs for machinery and

equipment and a large component of intermediate goods. The interdependence and horizontal linkage between agricultural development and external trade is also evident in the region's critical dependence on food imports, the dominance of agricultural raw materials in the export trade of non-oil economies of the region and the fact that trade provides an outlet for surplus agricultural products. However, the region's susceptibility to exogenous developments is nowhere more evident than in the oil sector, the mainstay of development in many countries.

34.12 Furthermore, rapid technological achievements at the global level have led to a further widening of the technological gap between the countries in the ESCWA region and the more advanced countries in other regions. The process of economic reform in member countries themselves, and exogenous developments, in particular the GATT agreement, could have a limiting impact on national scientific and technological institutions and on the transfer of technology to the region.

34.13 Environmental concerns are expected to acquire an increasing importance in the efforts of the region geared towards sustainable development. Issues such as desertification, industrial waste management, surface- and ground-water pollution, urban environmental deterioration, the social setting and the aftermath of the recent Gulf war will have to be addressed. Environment is to be viewed in the wide sense of Agenda 21 and in its physical aspect, with emphasis on sustainability.

34.14 A major challenge confronting the countries of the region is the transformation of their economies to meet the challenges of the coming century. This would require not only securing huge sums for investment, but also reconsidering or redefining their economic philosophies and pattern of development, especially the balance between economic management and market forces. The policy mix pursued in the past has generally not been conducive to rapid and equitable growth and development. In effect, it has resulted in the emergence or accentuation of internal and external imbalances and constraints, as reflected mainly in high and persistent budget and balance-of-payment deficits, heavy indebtedness and reduced financial resources for development. As a consequence, most countries in the region have been implementing economic reform, including structural adjustment programmes and policies, on their own initiative or in cooperation with IMF and the World Bank, with the overall objective of achieving a more sustainable pattern of development in the long term.

34.15 Current economic trends indicate that economic globalization will continue. Yet many ESCWA countries lack the human resources needed to participate in the process and transform their economies so as to become internationally competitive.

34.16 Furthermore, in an age where possession of information and the ability to store and transmit it have come to assume a crucial role in determining the competitiveness of nations, basic weaknesses and deficiencies in the area of statistics and information remain a major impediment to the efforts of the Governments in the region to formulate effective development policies.

34.17 The launching of the peace process, and in particular the recently concluded declaration of principles for a peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), will undoubtedly have a major economic and social impact on the region. The resulting new climate would require constant monitoring by the ESCWA secretariat in order for it to adapt its activities to address the various issues raised above.

34.18 Thus, a new impetus to foster regional cooperation is needed in order to address adequately the economic, social, cultural and ecological dimensions for a sustainable and systemic development of the ESCWA region. It is of utmost importance at the present juncture to place human development, in its broad sense, at the centre of developmental concerns.

2. Overall strategy

34.19 In implementing the programme, ESCWA, as a multidisciplinary body, will identify and formulate a coordinated approach to regional cooperation, within the context of the economic and social plans and programmes of its member States and its perception of relevant regional and global developments. In so doing, it will carry out the following main activities:

(a) Carry out research and surveys to monitor developments, including emerging issues, and propose action for the sustainable socio-economic development of the region;

(b) Develop statistical databases and information pertinent to the work of ESCWA and end-users, with a view to serving as a major source of economic and social statistics and information on the region within the United Nations system;

(c) Organize intergovernmental and expert group meetings, conferences, symposiums, seminars and training workshops, with a view to facilitating joint endeavours, exchange of experience and information taking advantage of regional complementarities and cooperation possibilities;

(d) Provide substantive secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and assist the Economic and Social Council, upon request, in discharging its mandate as it relates to the region;

(e) Provide advisory services, upon request, to States members of the Commission, with a view, in particular, to enhancing their policy-making and institutional capacity to achieve sustainable development; and contribute to the formulation, execution, monitoring and evaluation of technical assistance programmes in a variety of substantive areas with UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) and other funding entities;

(f) Develop close cooperation with the other regional commissions, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, the Department for Development Support and Management Services, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNCHS (Habitat) and

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so on, with a view to avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarity and exchange of information; coordinate with other units and bodies of the United Nations system, such as FAO, ILO, UNESCO and UNIDO, as well as with relevant regional organizations, in particular OIC, LAS and its specialized agencies, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and other regional groupings.

3. Subprogramme structure and priorities

34.20 Within the broad objective of promoting sustainable development, social development would encompass more than welfare and economic development, and more than growth and efficiency. The main challenge confronting the ESCWA region is the interrelation among the three main dimensions of sustainable development, namely, management of natural resources and the environment, improvement of the quality of life and economic development. Each of these components is a prerequisite for and a result of the other two.

34.21 New realities in the world and the globalization of economic, social and political events have a direct impact on the above-mentioned three dimensions of sustainable development in the region. Part of the mandate of ESCWA is to act as a warning system to its member States regarding the impact of global political, economic, cultural and technological changes at the national and regional levels.

34.22 In translating the challenges facing the region into programme activities, five subprogrammes, which represent core themes that may cut across several organizational units, are proposed. The activities under each subprogramme will be carried out by task forces representing relevant specializations existing in the Commission.

34.23 The subprogrammes are as follows:

Subprogramme 1. Management of natural resources and environment

Subprogramme 2. Improvement of the quality of life

Subprogramme 3. Economic development and cooperation

Subprogramme 4. Regional development and global changes

Subprogramme 5. Special programmes and issues

34.24 Subprogrammes 1, 2 and 3 are designated high priority.

34.25 Statistical data is a prerequisite for all the Commission's analytical and policy-oriented activities. The secretariat will develop timely, reliable and relevant internationally comparable statistics in the ESCWA region, in cooperation with national, regional and international bodies concerned, and develop reliable regional databases on specific sectoral or multisectoral areas needed for the assessment and monitoring of economic and social development in the region, and for the implementation of its work programme.

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B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

(a) Objectives

34.26 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 32/158; 36/193; 38/151; 39/173; 39/176; 40/208; 41/65; 41/170; 42/184, paragraphs 14 and 15; 42/186; 42/187, paragraphs 8 and 15; 43/193; 45/181; 45/199; 45/209; S-18/3; and 47/191; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1983/52; 1983/54; 1985/49; 1985/52, paragraph 1; 1985/167; 1987/7, paragraph 3; 1987/9; 1987/10, paragraph 4; 1989/6; 1989/7, paragraph 3; 1989/8, paragraph 6; 1991/84, paragraph 7; 1991/85, paragraphs 3, 5, 6 and 9; 1991/89, paragraphs 2 to 4; 1991/90, paragraphs 2 and 4; Agenda 21, chapters 8 to 10, 12, 14, 18, 21, 34, 38 and 40; and ESCWA resolutions 81 (VII); 165 (XV); and 180 (XVI).

34.27 The ESCWA countries are predominantly arid and semi-arid. Owing to the fragile ecological conditions prevailing in the region, any ecological damage is extremely difficult to repair or reverse. Rapid population growth and poverty have led to excessive exploitation of the scarce land and water resources of the region. Inadequate strategies and policies for the sound management of these resources and insufficient appreciation of the relation between resource management and sustainable development have accelerated the rate of soil erosion, depletion of underground aquifers, salinity, desertification and other forms of resource degradation.

34.28 The shortage of water resources is a serious constraint on social and economic development in the ESCWA region. Water security is further aggravated by the fact that the major water sources originate mostly in neighbouring countries. The water sector in the region is facing chronic problems emanating from (a) inefficient management and inadequate national water planning and policies; (b) inadequacy of hydrological, hydrogeological and hydrometeorological data and thus the lack of a thorough assessment of conventional and non-conventional water resources required for establishing priorities and proper distribution and allocation among end-users; (c) shortage of skilled manpower and expertise, particularly in areas requiring the use of advanced technologies; (d) shortage of financial resources in many countries of the region to implement large-scale water development projects; (e) inadequate water supply and sanitation, especially in rural and remote areas; and (f) water pollution and contamination caused by the absence of adequate policies required for environmentally sound development.

34.29 The most salient problems and obstacles hindering overall development of mineral resources are (a) the lack of a comprehensive assessment of available mineral resources; (b) lack of effective regional cooperation and coordination of mining activities; (c) a shortage of the financial resources needed in several countries of the region to obtain the sophisticated technologies for undertaking mineral development projects; and (d) a shortage of skilled manpower.

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34.30 Petroleum constitutes the major source of material wealth in the region, which is also a major supplier of oil to the world. However, a number of ESCWA countries are deprived of or lack completely oil or natural gas resources. The importance of natural gas is growing rapidly in terms of discoveries, utilization and export potential.

34.31 Energy policies and planning at the national level need to be improved, especially energy planning methodologies and techniques since they constitute important elements in the preparation and implementation of country energy plans. The energy balances drawn up by a number of ESCWA countries are not sufficiently accurate or comprehensive to serve as a basis for a reliable assessment of their energy situations. The excessive use of depletable energy resources and the lack of appropriate policies and measures for more efficient use of energy require that the issue of energy consumption be analysed and measures taken to increase efficiency in energy utilization.

34.32 Activities undertaken in the ESCWA region for the development of renewable sources of energy are largely limited to pilot projects. Other than in a few cases, such activities have not yet led to a tangible commercialization of renewable energy technologies.

34.33 Environmental degradation in the ESCWA region results from inadequate management of land, water and energy resources, lack of public awareness and inappropriate regulations and policies. Population growth, poverty and migration are additional factors contributing to environmental degradation.

34.34 Economic and social issues confronting ESCWA countries are often perceived as separate from the environment; consequently, environmental issues are not given the priority they deserve by decision makers.

34.35 The objectives of subprogramme 1 are the following:

(a) To promote the introduction of appropriate techniques and technologies for assessing natural resources in the region and contribute to the development of national plans for their exploitation, in the context of regional and international efforts to highlight the environmental dimensions of sustainable development;

(b) To enhance proper management of water resources, including quality control, establishment of guidelines and principles for the optimum utilization of available water resources, particularly in the case of shared water basins, and increasing awareness of the relationship between water scarcity and the process of sustainable development;

(c) To develop a long-term perspective for energy options in the region as well as strategies and policies for environmentally sound management of energy resources and energy waste and the development of renewable energy resources, particularly in rural and remote areas;

(d) To promote cooperation among ESCWA member States in the fields of natural resources and the environment in the context of existing and planned regional arrangements, institutions and projects.

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(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.36 The means of action envisaged by the secretariat include the following:

(a) Conducting studies on planning and management of land use, water and energy resources with special emphasis on desertification control, water budget evaluation and rural energy issues, including surveys and assessments related to those activities;

(b) Organizing meetings aimed at developing natural resource strategies and policies and at promoting regional cooperation and coordination of activities and exchange of information on various issues related to natural resource development; and assisting in the utilization of appropriate technologies for non-conventional water and energy resources;

(c) Organizing training programmes, technical meetings and seminars at the national, subregional and regional levels with a view to developing capacity for the improvement of water and energy resource management, environmental impact assessment and issues related to the utilization of low-cost and appropriate technologies in the water and energy fields;

(d) Maintaining and establishing regular contacts with national, regional and international organizations for the coordination of natural resources and environment-related activities and in the development of natural resources and their efficient use, as well as taking regional and subregional initiatives to make sustainable development the guiding principle in the management of natural resources within the region;

(e) Monitoring, analysing and reporting on emerging environmental issues, especially those relevant to the region, and on progress made in the implementation of Agenda 21, focusing on issues of primary concern to the region, in particular, land, air, water and noise pollution, waste management and environmental impact assessment.

SUBPROGRAMME 2. IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE

(a) Objectives

34.37 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 40/108, paragraph 10; 41/111, paragraph 2; 42/178, paragraphs 3 and 8; 43/99, paragraphs 5 to 8; 44/55; 44/56, paragraphs 8 and 12; 44/59, paragraphs 1, 4 and 8; 44/70, paragraphs 7, 9 and 13; 44/236, annex, paragraphs 5 and 8; 46/141, paragraphs 2, 5 and 6; 46/92, paragraphs 1, 2 and 7; 47/92; 47/176, paragraphs 2, 9 and 14; 47/180, paragraphs 5, 16 and 19; 47/197, paragraphs 8 to 10; 48/183, paragraphs 1, 2, 5 and 7; 48/184, paragraphs 5 and 6; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1991/230; 1987/40, paragraph 5; and 1988/47, paragraphs 2 to 4; and ESCWA resolutions 186 (XVI); 187 (XVI); and 188 (XVI).

34.38 Issues related to the improvement of the quality of life need to be dealt with through a multidisciplinary approach, reflecting the perception of sustainable development as development of people, by people and for people.

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34.39 Improvement of the quality of life in the ESCWA region, encompassing material and non-material aspects, is closely correlated with proper management of natural resources and economic development. It is also affected by political instability, inadequate performance of the developmental machinery and rapidly changing social values and structures.

34.40 A salient characteristic of the ESCWA region is its relatively high rate of population growth, which, together with unfavourable economic conditions in some countries of the region, exacerbates problems of unemployment and underemployment in both the organized and the informal sectors. Unemployment of university graduates and widespread underemployment in the public sector are further reflections of the mismanagement of human resources.

34.41 Poverty is increasing in the ESCWA region. It is estimated that one third of the population of the Arab world in 1990 was living below the poverty line. These high levels of unemployment and poverty lead to a low level of social integration.

34.42 Women in the ESCWA region are still disadvantaged in terms of access to resources, level of education, participation in economic activity and participation in the development process and institutional support activities. Another important issue facing women in the region is the growing conflict between women's public and family roles and the lack of an integrated approach to development that would provide viable solutions to that conflict.

34.43 Social integration in the ESCWA region also needs to be enhanced through greater attention to the needs of the youth population, which represents the largest population segment, as well as to those of the disabled and other vulnerable groups (such as the poor living in marginal urban and rural settlements and communities) who suffer most from the deteriorating economic conditions and the social and political structure of the region.

34.44 Patterns of development in the region have led to rapid and unchecked urbanization, the explosive growth of some cities, expansion of poor and marginalized settlements, and further deprivation of rural communities.

34.45 Rural development and alleviation of poverty are crucial development issues in most ESCWA countries. Despite the agrarian reform programmes undertaken in some countries, agriculture is still dominated by small and fragmented holdings, and the problems of marginal and landless farmers remain serious in many of them. The region lacks viable and efficient rural institutions (extension, marketing, finance) to confront effectively the ever-increasing and complex task of development. Moreover, there is still a wide gap between urban and rural areas in the availability of basic services and employment opportunities.

34.46 Finally, an important issue to be addressed under this subprogramme is the availability and reliability of quantitative and qualitative information and indicators, which are essential for the formulation of sound social policies.

34.47 The objectives of subprogramme 2 are:

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(a) To raise awareness of the impact of population on the quality of life, to formulate adequate population policies and to promote the integration of population variables into development;

(b) To promote a comprehensive approach to human development, as one of the key factors affecting the quality of life, through in-depth evaluation of the development process at the national and regional levels. In addition, enhancement of social integration of youth and other vulnerable groups will be emphasized;

(c) To promote productive employment, through the continuous assessment of labour market developments, the strengthening of planning capabilities of labour ministries and the development of regional policies that would facilitate labour movement among Arab countries;

(d) To address critical issues hampering the integration and participation of Arab women, including young and rural women, in development and to assist member States in responding effectively to women's imminent needs for empowerment, employment and legal awareness, with particular attention to be given to assisting in institution-building and capacity-building of non-governmental organizations;

(e) To examine the impact of development trends and social change on human settlements and the quality of life of local communities, with a view to raising awareness of the problems and needs of human settlements in the region and promoting integrated and appropriate policies and programmes aimed at sustainable development of human settlements, with particular emphasis on participatory and grass-roots approaches and programmes;

(f) To promote an integrated approach to community development based on growth, equity and participation of the people.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.48 Based on the above, the following are the courses of action of the secretariat:

(a) Monitoring the population situation through the publication of demographic and related socio-economic indicators and population projections; undertaking studies on determinants and consequences of population growth; organizing meetings on integrating population variables into the development process; and disseminating population information;

(b) Monitoring the social situation in the region, undertaking in-depth analyses of the human development process at the national level; assessing the social impact of economic measures and reforms; formulating adequate social policies with particular attention to disadvantaged groups; and monitoring labour market development to promote gainful employment;

(c) Collecting and disseminating data and information on women in Western Asia; following up on the recommendations emanating from the July 1994 Expert Group Meeting on the Arab Family in a Changing Society, convened in observance

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of the 1994 International Year of the Family, from the Intergovernmental Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women (November 1994) and from the World Conference on Women (1995); examining through field research and comparative case-studies the changing role of the Arab family and assessing the institutions that provide services to support and/or replace family services;

(d) Monitoring changes and trends in the human settlement situation through analysis of human settlement data and indicators; undertaking studies, providing technical assistance and organizing meetings and workshops related to urbanization and urban development and management; identifying appropriate technologies and norms for improving living standards and conditions for marginal and poor settlements; mobilizing human, financial and natural resources for the provision of adequate and affordable shelter and the promotion of balanced and appropriate human settlement development; formulating policies and plans for sustainability of human settlement development, with particular attention to the needs of special groups in the urban environment; assisting in the formulation of policies and programmes aimed at improving living conditions and the quality of life of depressed and precarious rural and urban settlements, through community participation and mobilization for action;

(e) Assessing and evaluating community development (urban and rural) policies and programmes; strengthening the technical and institutional capacity for agricultural and rural development; support in the areas of extension, credit, marketing and community development; and promoting the integration of rural women into the mainstream of agricultural and rural development.

SUBPROGRAMME 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

(a) Objectives

34.49 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 41/171, annex, paragraphs 12, 13, 27 and 29; 41/182, paragraph 1 (a) and (b); 41/202, paragraph 1 (b), (d) and (e); 42/184, paragraph 15; 42/192; 42/198, paragraphs 17 and 18; 43/178, paragraphs 5 and 16; 43/184; 44/14, section B, paragraphs 1 to 4; 44/205, paragraphs 5 and 11 to 13; 45/196; 45/199, annex, paragraphs 56 to 77 and 103 to 112; 46/144, paragraph 4; 47/152, paragraphs 2 and 3; 47/153; 47/171, paragraphs 1 to 3; 47/178, paragraphs 1 and 2; 47/183, paragraphs 6 and 16; 47/184, paragraph 1; and 48/180, paragraphs 3 to 5; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1988/74, paragraph 2; 1991/75, paragraph 4; 1993/63, paragraph 3; 1990/71; and 1991/55; and ESCWA resolutions 92 (VIII), paragraph 3; 138 (XII), paragraph 3; 170 (XV), paragraph 3; and 191 (XVI), paragraphs 4 to 7.

34.50 The problems and challenges confronting the countries of the region in their efforts to promote growth and development reflect shortcomings in macroeconomic management policies at the national level, an inability to exploit the potential of regional cooperation and a rapidly changing, and most unfavourable, international economic environment.

34.51 The importance of macroeconomic management and policies in the region derives from the direct and extensive involvement of the public sector in

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economic activities in several member countries, on the one hand, and from the influence that Governments exert in shaping the overall setting for the undertaking of economic activity in all countries through policy formulation, institution-building, economic negotiations and regional and international agreements, on the other hand. The policy mix pursued in the past has not generally been conducive to rapid and equitable growth and development. In effect, it has resulted in the emergence or accentuation of internal and external imbalances and constraints. These policies have not been very successful in alleviating poverty and improving income distribution.

34.52 Regional cooperation, though largely spontaneous, increased significantly after the first adjustment of oil prices in the 1970s, mainly through trade, aid, labour movement, workers' remittances and joint ventures, resulting in a positive impact on economic development throughout the region. The pressure on and subsequent fall in oil prices since the mid-1980s have reduced those flows considerably. The situation has been further aggravated by the Gulf crisis, which has sharply reduced the resources available for development in the traditionally surplus member countries themselves and for assistance to other countries in the region. These developments underline the significance of interdependence for development in the region as a whole and for the stability of member countries, and the need to forge closer links and reduce disparities in development levels within and among countries. The reduction in financial resources for development calls for the evaluation of national financial systems and the status of regional cooperation with regard to mobilization, management and allocation of financial resources and the formulation of appropriate policy measures, and for increasing awareness at the national policy-making level of the need to promote diversification of national income and domestic revenue sources. It also calls for greater attention to foreign direct investment, which is emerging as a major source of development finance.

34.53 The external economic environment and relations assume an important role as determinants of growth and development in the region. Foreign trade plays a crucial role through its contribution to income, savings, government revenues and employment generation. The importance of foreign trade derives also from the heavy dependence of the region on the outside world for a significant portion of its food, intermediate products and capital equipment requirements; moreover, it is the main vehicle for acquiring modern technology and know-how and a major source of development finance. A number of problems hamper the contribution of foreign trade to growth and development. The trade of ESCWA countries remains highly concentrated in terms of commodity composition and direction, intraregional trade being a modest fraction of the total. The protectionist policies applied by major trading partners to products in which countries in the region have a comparative advantage adversely affect exports. The conclusion of the Uruguay Round, the formation and/or enlargement of trading blocs and developments in Eastern and Central Europe pose additional challenges.

34.54 The pursuit of import substitution policies has reduced the incentive to export, rendered competition a marginal concern and discouraged the search for new markets, while promoting increased resort to non-competitive trade channels. As a result, insufficient attention has been paid to export determinants such as financing, exchange rate policies, trade regimes and product quality and cost. The trade of the region is also handicapped by inadequate information and high

transaction costs. Trade in services, both in the traditional sense and in new forms based on information and communications, is still modest: the potential of regional cooperation has hardly been exploited.

34.55 The rich natural, cultural and historical potential of the ESCWA region has not yet been fully utilized in the development of international and intraregional tourism. Tourism development policies based on integrated tourism planning and marketing, which also take into consideration the socio-economic, cultural, historic and environmental particularities of the region, could contribute much to the development and prosperity of ESCWA member countries.

34.56 There is also a need for mechanisms to channel foreign direct investment into priority areas of national investment programmes; encourage indigenous enterprises; ensure introduction of environmental standards; protect against and compensate host countries for transfer pricing abuses; and ensure that the financial activities of transnational corporations are consistent with the country's balance-of-payment objective. The introduction of such mechanisms requires a consistent policy environment that enhances the overall contribution of transnational corporations to development. Critical to such efforts is concern for the possible adverse social and cultural impact of the operations of transnational corporations in ESCWA member countries. Actions by ESCWA member countries would need to be complemented by policies and mechanisms aimed at improving the quality and quantity of investment flows, and foreign investment policies that balance between facilitation and regulation should be devised.

34.57 Agricultural productivity has been increasing at low rates in most of the ESCWA member countries. Growth in food production is lower than consumption, resulting in a widening food gap and an increasing dependence on external sources of supply that causes significant financial problems to the low-income countries of the region.

34.58 In the absence of an effective framework for regional cooperation, the countries of the region mostly act individually in areas essential for agricultural development, disregarding the region-wide opportunities that would come from utilizing complementarity and specialization in production based on comparative advantages region-wide.

34.59 Policy interventions constitute another important factor affecting agricultural production. Policies in the region have generally been characterized by a strong urban bias. The economic incentives provided to agricultural producers have generally been inadequate. Acreage and output-price controls and overvalued currencies were among the main policy instruments that have negatively affected the performance of the agricultural sector in the region.

34.60 Another major obstacle to increasing agricultural production in the region is the lack of trained manpower, particularly in the field of agricultural planning, policy analysis and project formulation. No less important are the shortcomings in the training of personnel entrusted with the execution of agricultural development projects. The capacity to absorb the flow of investment funds depends to a great extent on the above-mentioned types of training.

34.61 Given the resource constraints, a weak level of technology has been a significant hindrance to increased agricultural productivity. Although some ESCWA countries have made efforts to benefit from the transfer of emerging new technologies, there is an urgent need to fill the wide technology gap in agriculture.

34.62 The agricultural sector of several countries in the region has suffered severe damage to its infrastructure and production capabilities as a result of military conflicts and civil strife, which have also had a negative impact on intraregional trade in agricultural commodities and on the movement of labour.

34.63 Over the last two decades the region has witnessed marked expansion in industrial production capacity, especially in resource-based industries, such as petrochemicals, fertilizers and cement, and in traditional industries such as textiles and food. The industrial sector, however, is still characterized by a narrow range of manufactured products and low levels of specialization, productivity and capacity utilization. There is little complementarity in the production system and coordination among the countries of the region is almost non-existent. Industrial infrastructure and supporting services remain inadequate, particularly regarding entrepreneurship, skills transport facilities, financial services, research and development, engineering design, consultancy and information support.

34.64 There is a crucial need for endogenous science and technology activities in the region. The issues addressed by the Vienna Conference on Science and Technology for Development more than a decade ago remain valid for the region. In addition, the region now faces the challenges and opportunities created by global technological achievements. Therefore, building and strengthening endogenous science and technology capabilities and infrastructure, together with improving the region's advantages in the technology transfer process, remain a priority concern. There is still considerable ambiguity with regard to policy measures and mechanisms to support research and development to adapt new technologies to local conditions. The subprogramme will therefore address issues related to technology assessment, linkages between research and development and the production and service sectors, challenges and opportunities created by global technological achievements and their impact on technology transfer.

34.65 The lack of coordination mechanisms, inadequate planning and the complicated border-crossing formalities among the member States and between them and neighbouring countries obstruct the smooth flow of passengers and goods, negating the economic viability of trade. The region also faces the challenge of completing the missing links in the network of land transport infrastructure between the neighbouring Arab countries and in maintaining and improving existing links. As most of the trade in the region is seaborne, the cost of carriage of goods by sea is of vital importance. Increased attention should, therefore, be given to multimodal, maritime transport and to ports, shipping services and the development of national merchant fleets to increase the share of national carriers in external trade, particularly in solid and liquid bulk commodities. The sector is also suffering from a shortage of skilled manpower for activities ranging from planning to operations and management, particularly middle- and higher-level management. These issues call for special attention.

34.66 In view of the above, the objectives of subprogramme 3 are the following:

- (a) To promote economic and technical cooperation and integration among ESCWA member countries at the subregional and regional levels;
- (b) To promote activities aimed at strengthening the capabilities of member countries in the formulation and implementation of comprehensive plans, strategies and policies;
- (c) To sustain momentum of economic reform and structural transformation without aggravating social conditions;
- (d) To improve the mobilization and efficient use and management of domestic and external resources and to develop an enabling savings and investment environment;
- (e) To provide technical assistance for the assessment and development of local capabilities and governmental and non-governmental institutions involved in various sectors;
- (f) To promote private sector activities, particularly in small and medium-size enterprises, in various sectors and to support the development of human resources, entrepreneurship, management and technical skills;
- (g) To enhance the capacity of ESCWA member States to cope with the challenges and opportunities created by technological achievements at the global level;
- (h) To promote the expansion and diversification of trade in goods and services, particularly intraregional trade; enhance trade efficiency; and reduce transaction costs by introducing new technologies relating to customs data and clearance and transmission of trade-related information;
- (i) To further understanding of the nature and the political, legal, economic and social effects of the activities of transnational corporations in host countries; enhance the contribution of transnational corporations to national development goals, while controlling and reducing their negative effects and strengthening the capacity of host developing countries in their dealings with transnational corporations.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.67 The secretariat will pursue the above objectives mainly through studies (technical publications and reports), the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings and the provision of technical assistance and advisory services upon the request of member countries, as follows:

- (a) Analysis of regional trends in development policies and plans; conceptualization of cooperation among ESCWA countries and identification of regional cooperation possibilities at the macro and micro levels and in various sectors and economic activities; economic and social implications of economic reform and transformation, including comparative experiences in privatization

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and their impact on regional economic cooperation; the role of financial markets in the mobilization and management of financial resources and in the privatization process; financial resource availability and management; the status and requirements of cooperation in the monetary and financial field and the financing of public sector investment and budget deficits; environmentally sound technology policies and acquisitions; standard and quality control; and multimodal, land, maritime, urban and air transport and border-crossing facilitation;

(b) Training courses for officials and personnel in the public and private sectors to develop national capabilities, national and regional institutions, and technical managerial skills, in various sectors and areas;

(c) Annual review and analysis of performance, policies and strategies in the various sectors through the annual survey of economic and social developments in the ESCWA region and in the more specialized annual analytical reviews of developments and trends in external trade and payments and in the monetary and financial sectors, respectively, and improvement of the development debate through the publication for the first time in 1996 of a regional development journal.

SUBPROGRAMME 4. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL CHANGES

(a) Objectives

34.68 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions S-18/3; 41/165; 44/205; 45/199; 45/234; 46/144; 46/145; 47/152; 47/171; 47/178; and 47/183; and ESCWA resolutions 190 (XVI) and 191 (XVI).

34.69 The subprogramme will deal with the present and potential implications of globalization, with particular attention to the impact of its economic, technological, social and cultural elements. The emergence, consolidation and/or enlargement of regional and economic blocs, coupled with the further liberalization of international trade in goods and services will have direct impact on development prospects in all ESCWA member States, individually and collectively. Of significance to the region are the potential implications of the recent conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the Maastricht Treaty and the economic transformation in Eastern and Central Europe. These exogenous factors will leave lasting effects on the socio-economic conditions of the region.

34.70 The subprogramme will therefore focus on the identification and assessment of the continuous process of globalization itself, its mechanisms, modalities and impact. In addition, this subprogramme will deal with the adjustment the ESCWA member States will have to undertake as a result of exogenous factors and their immediate and long-term structural implications. All ESCWA member States, individually and collectively, will have to undergo transformation, as appropriate and necessary, in their economic structure, value system and social institutions to meet the different challenges of globalization.

34.71 In the light of the above, the objectives of subprogramme 4 are:

(a) To assess the impact for ESCWA member States, of exogenous developments, in particular the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the emerging economic blocs on the social and economic development of the region;

(b) To assist ESCWA members to adopt relevant policies and implement programmes that would allow the countries to make a smoother adjustment in their economic and social systems;

(c) To promote regional cooperation among ESCWA members so that they can coordinate policies and programmes that specifically address the effects of globalization.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.72 The course of action of the secretariat will include:

(a) Undertaking studies on the impact of globalization, providing insights into potential areas that require immediate and long-term action;

(b) Compiling data and disseminating information on different aspects of the globalization process in order to enhance governmental and private sectors' capacities to deal with its immediate impacts;

(c) Undertaking studies on the impact of economic reform policies to be adopted by the different types of economy in the region.

SUBPROGRAMME 5. SPECIAL PROGRAMMES AND ISSUES

(a) Objectives

34.73 The legislative authority for this subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 40/169, paragraph 5; 41/165, paragraph 3; 43/186, paragraph 1; 44/155; 44/179, paragraphs 5 and 6; 44/180, paragraph 4; 44/236, annex, paragraphs 5 and 8; 45/193; 45/222; 45/234; 46/145; 46/156, paragraphs 7 to 11 and 14; 46/173; 46/174; 47/179; 48/171; and 48/213; and ESCWA resolutions 100 (VIII); 118 (X); 172 (XV); 176 (XV); 182 (XVI); and 183 (XVI) to 185 (XVI).

34.74 Yemen belongs to the special group of countries classified as least developed countries by the United Nations. Economic reforms in that country have not gone far to accelerate growth and alleviate poverty. Action at the national level alone is not likely to achieve the development objectives of the country. Therefore, special consideration is to be given to development issues and problems confronting it.

34.75 A major development that could significantly influence the regional setting is the Middle East peace process, which was set in motion in the Madrid Conference in 1991 and enhanced by the agreement of 13 September 1993 between Israel and the PLO. There is a need to examine the possible impact of that

process on the social and economic conditions in the region and on regional cooperation.

34.76 In fulfilment of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and ESCWA on assistance to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, the ESCWA secretariat has paid special attention to the different needs of the Palestinian people. As a result of the agreement between Israel and the PLO, the role of ESCWA in promoting and providing technical assistance and implementation of projects within the scope of Palestinian national development has been emphasized. Attention will also be focused on the Arab population in the occupied Golan Heights and in southern Lebanon.

34.77 The region has been suffering from the consequences of military conflicts for the last two decades, which have brought about huge destruction and drastic deterioration in the physical and institutional infrastructure of some ESCWA countries. To be effective, social and economic reconstruction and rehabilitation need to be addressed within a regional context and perspective.

34.78 Subprogramme 5 aims at:

(a) Strengthening the capacities of Yemen and of the Palestinian people to build their national economy and institutions;

(b) Supporting national and regional efforts for the social and economic rehabilitation and reconstruction of countries affected by wars and conflicts;

(c) Assessing the implications of the Middle East peace process for regional development and cooperation.

(b) Course of action of the secretariat

34.79 The course of action will include:

(a) Monitoring the implementation in Yemen of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s;

(b) Undertaking studies on issues related to the development of Palestinian national capabilities in selected sectors, and assisting in, and implementing, different rehabilitation schemes;

(c) Organizing expert group meetings and training workshops in selected sectors for developing human resources, in Yemen and in the territories under PLO administration;

(d) Formulating, promoting and participating in the implementation of technical assistance projects, and providing advisory services;

(e) Assessing the social and economic conditions of the Arab population in the occupied Golan Heights and in southern Lebanon.



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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VII. HUMAN RIGHTS, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Programme 35. Promotion and protection of human rights

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.
2. Regulation 3.11 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.
3. The revised programme 35, Promotion and protection of human rights, submitted below replaces the narrative of programme 35 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and subsequently revised by the Assembly in its resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and issued in document A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1. The new text has been elaborated as a result of the adoption by the World Conference on Human Rights, held from 14 to 25 June 1993, of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993.

PROGRAMME 35. PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

A. Programme

1. General orientation

35.1 The Charter of the United Nations includes among the purposes of the Organization the achievement of international cooperation in solving problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. On that basis and that of articles 13, 55 and 56, the United Nations has built an extensive programme for the promotion and protection of human rights. That programme is founded on numerous international treaties and declarations prepared and adopted by the United Nations and includes a system of monitoring the implementation of treaties through expert committees; fact-finding procedures relating to serious violations of human rights; procedures for dealing with complaints of violations from individuals and groups; ongoing projects of research into emerging human rights issues; preparation of new international standards; a programme of advisory services and technical assistance; and public information and educational activities.

35.2 The framework for the future development of the United Nations Human Rights Programme lies in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993. The Conference reaffirmed the basic principles governing international human rights activities, set out specific goals in a wide number of areas and identified various methods to achieve those objectives, including strengthening international cooperation. The Conference adopted an integrated, holistic and universal approach to the promotion and protection of all human rights based on the equal dignity and importance of all human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social, the interdependent and interrelated nature of human rights and on the need for concerted action to promote and protect human rights by the components of the United Nations system. It called for greater attention to be given to the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights. As a basic principle of human rights, the Conference reaffirmed that the human person is the central subject of human rights, should be the principal beneficiary and should participate actively in the realization of human rights.

35.3 The Conference recognized the mutually reinforcing interrelationship between democracy, development and respect for human rights and focused attention on the impact of extreme poverty and exclusion on the enjoyment of human rights and the need for action to eliminate extreme poverty and social exclusion. It further recognized the importance of implementing the right to development as a human right, of building democratic institutions, of respecting human rights in the administration of justice and providing remedies for violations. In connection with peace-keeping operations, the Conference recommended that the reporting, experience and capabilities of the Centre for Human Rights and the human rights mechanisms be taken into account.

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35.4 The World Conference attached special importance to the integration of the status and human rights of women into the work of the United Nations human rights organs, and to strengthening protection for women's rights through new procedures and the establishment of closer ties between the organs dealing with women's issues and human rights in the United Nations. Special importance was also given to protecting the rights of children, including children in especially difficult circumstances and the girl child, to protecting trade union rights, the rights of vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers, minorities and indigenous people, and to ensuring that members of those groups participated in the search for solutions to their own problems. The Conference called upon all competent organs, bodies and agencies to review and monitor progress in protecting the rights of persons in those different groups.

35.5 An important premise underlying the Vienna Declaration is that every human being should be enabled effectively to enjoy his or her human rights wherever they live and without discrimination. Thus, the Declaration called for universal ratification of human rights treaties and protocols and for a concerted effort to be made for that purpose and provided for special attention to be given to the progress made towards that objective in 1998. The year 1995 was set as the target date for universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the year 2000 for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

35.6 The importance of the equal enjoyment of human rights was repeatedly underlined and the World Conference called for an end to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination and for concerted action at all levels to promote equality, dignity and tolerance. The World Conference also emphasized the important contribution that education and public information can make to the promotion and protection of human rights.

35.7 In addition to laying down general principles, the World Conference adopted guidelines for future action. The Vienna Declaration thus recommended that priority be given to national and international action to promote democracy, development and human rights and that assistance be provided in the human rights aspects of democratic elections, in the strengthening of the rule of law, the promotion of freedom of expression, the administration of justice, and in the real and effective participation of the people in decision-making processes. In that context the World Conference strongly recommended that a comprehensive programme be established within the United Nations in order to help States in the task of building and strengthening adequate national structures that have a direct impact on the overall observance of human rights and the maintenance of the rule of law. The Conference recommended that States consider preparing national plans of action that could be supported by the United Nations comprehensive programme.

35.8 The World Conference also called for the strengthening and improving of existing mechanisms of implementation for international treaties and the fact-finding special procedures, and recognized the necessity for a continuing adaptation of United Nations human rights machinery to current and future needs.

35.9 A key result of the World Conference was the realization that cooperation among Governments, the United Nations, other international organizations,

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national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations is essential for the effective promotion and protection of human rights. The role of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of human rights must be strengthened, renewed and revitalized if the promises of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action are to be kept. United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, regional intergovernmental organizations and national human rights institutions all have important contributions to make in that overall coordinated approach. Thus, the Conference called for an annual United Nations coordination meeting at a high level as one element in that approach.

35.10 The Vienna Declaration also contained provisions for review by the General Assembly and Commission of Human Rights of progress made in implementing its provisions.

35.11 At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly, in addition to endorsing the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, acted on a number of specific suggestions of the Conference, notably with regard to the proposals for three decades for action designed to give United Nations activities in human rights greater focus: one related to indigenous people, one to human rights education and one against racism and racial discrimination.

35.12 At the same session, the General Assembly also established the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as the United Nations official with principal responsibility for United Nations human rights activities, under the direction and authority of the Secretary-General (resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993).

35.13 The High Commissioner is responsible for promoting and protecting the effective enjoyment by all of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights; promoting and protecting the realization of the right to development and enhancing support from relevant bodies of the United Nations system for that purpose; providing, through the Centre for Human Rights and other appropriate institutions, advisory services and technical and financial assistance in the field of human rights; coordinating relevant United Nations education and public information programmes in that field; playing an active role in removing the current obstacles and in meeting the challenges to the full realization of all human rights and in preventing the continuation of human rights violations throughout the world; engaging in a dialogue with all Governments with a view to securing respect for all human rights; and carrying out tasks assigned to him by the competent bodies of the United Nations system in the field of human rights and making recommendations to them with a view to improving the promotion and protection of all human rights.

35.14 The High Commissioner is also responsible for enhancing international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights; coordination of the human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system; rationalization, adaptation, strengthening and streamlining of the United Nations machinery in the field of human rights with a view to improving its efficiency and effectiveness and overall supervision of the Centre for Human Rights.

2. Overall strategy

35.15 Achieving the objectives of the United Nations human rights programme, in particular within the framework of the Vienna Declaration and the mandate of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, will require a multifaced strategy consisting of:

- (a) Increased international cooperation in the field of human rights among Governments, international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations;
- (b) The adoption of an integrated and global approach within the United Nations system to the promotion and protection of human rights;
- (c) Achieving universal ratification of the basic human rights treaties as soon as possible (the Convention on the Rights of the Child by 1995 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by 2000);
- (d) The adoption of specific measures and procedures to achieve the integration of the status and human rights of women into all human rights activities;
- (e) Developing ways and means for the effective promotion and protection of the realization of the right to development and enhancing support from relevant bodies of the United Nations system for that purpose;
- (f) Developing ways and means to undertake effective action to bring human rights violations to an end, to prevent violations and to identify and overcome obstacles to the enjoyment of human rights;
- (g) Developing and implementing an improved and expanded advisory service programme and the preparation of a comprehensive United Nations programme of assistance;
- (h) Giving equal attention to all human rights and finding ways to improve the definition and protection of economic, social and cultural rights;
- (i) Developing means of ensuring an impartial and non-selective approach to the promotion of human rights and of dealing with violations on a worldwide basis;
- (j) Implementing the programme of action for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People;
- (k) Implementing the programme of action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination;
- (l) Implementing the programme of action for the United Nations decade for human rights education;

(m) Strengthening and improving the implementation of international human rights treaties;

(n) Strengthening and improving the work of the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and their working groups;

(o) Strengthening and improving the special procedures mechanisms relating to phenomena of human rights violations and specific situations;

(p) Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations in the area of research and standard setting;

(q) Developing and implementing an overall programme of human rights public information within the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights.

3. Subprogramme structure and priorities

35.16 The programme on promotion and protection of human rights will consist of the following subprogrammes:

Subprogramme 1	International cooperation for human rights
Subprogramme 2	Implementation of international instruments
Subprogramme 3	Fact-finding and special procedures
Subprogramme 4	Petitions and appeals
Subprogramme 5	Legislation and prevention of discrimination and research and standard setting
Subprogramme 6	Technical advisory services and publications

B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(a) Objectives

35.17 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from the Charter of the United Nations; General Assembly resolutions 48/121 and 48/141; the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; and Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/95.

35.18 The achievement of the human rights objectives fixed in the Charter, the international human rights instruments and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action requires the development of a strong programme of international cooperation and inter-agency coordination and the preparation of a substantive

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policy for successful cooperation and progress in the promotion and protection of human rights.

35.19 Opening a dialogue with all Governments with a view to securing respect for all human rights is a crucial element in the new United Nations approach to promotion and protection of human rights. This will enable the moral influence of human rights and the international community to be used in an objective, impartial and non-selective way to help identify human rights problems, bring about consideration of possible solutions and improve respect for human rights.

35.20 The main aim of subprogramme 1 is to ensure that a coherent policy on human rights matters is developed and maintained throughout the United Nations system.

35.21 Increased coordination and cooperation within the United Nations system, between the United Nations and other international organizations, with the non-governmental organization community and with grass-roots organizations will also be required. Within the United Nations this means ensuring that all agencies, bodies and programmes better understand the interrelationship between their activities and the protection of human rights and the contribution that respect for human rights can have in achieving their own objectives. Human right objectives must be integrated into the objectives and policies of the various agencies, bodies and programmes concerned. Human rights must also be integrated into United Nations early warning, peacemaking and peace-keeping activities and into post-conflict peace-building.

35.22 A comprehensive effort will be required to achieve universal ratification of the principal United Nations human rights treaties. This means the involvement of all actors and bodies from the Commission on Human Rights, the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, to agency heads, the press and the non-governmental organization community. The integration of the status and human rights of women into the work of the United Nations human rights organs, strengthening protection for women's rights through new procedures and establishing closer ties between the organs dealing with women's issues and rights in the United Nations will also be the object of a special programme of activities.

35.23 The Vienna Declaration called for the United Nations to develop a comprehensive approach and for States to consider drafting national plans of action for human rights that the United Nations could support. Setting up such a programme will be an ambitious challenge, as will its operation and administration. Also, the integration of projects designed to promote the right to development and its economic, social and cultural components will be important tasks. Another important element will be connecting closely the advisory services programme with the work and recommendations of the various human rights committees, such as that on the right of the child and on economic, social and cultural rights, and seeking ways of associating them with the preparation of national plans of action. Further, the out-posting of human rights officers as resource persons in the area of advisory services and information and the opening of human rights offices, at the request of Governments, has already shown its usefulness and should become an element of growing importance in the programme.

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35.24 Increased inter-agency cooperation in human rights education and information activities will be necessary. Laying a strong foundation of support for human rights in the general public through education and information is a crucial element in achieving the objectives of Vienna. Non-governmental organizations and Governments attach growing importance to human rights education. The Vienna Declaration contained significant paragraphs on the subject and the General Assembly has foreseen a United Nations decade for human rights education. Public information about human rights is also another important area for the development of overall programmes.

35.25 There are a number of other specific objectives under this subprogramme that need stronger comprehensive review and action within and outside the United Nations system through cooperation, including determining ways to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development, methods of bringing violations of human rights to an end, identifying obstacles to the enjoyment of human rights and finding ways to overcome them, and rationalizing human rights machinery.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.26 To achieve the objectives listed above, it is envisaged:

(a) To establish dialogue with Governments in order to promote and protect all human rights, particularly facilitating the ratification of international human rights instruments, identifying obstacles to the full realization of all human rights, including the right to development and ensuring the largest possible enjoyment of all rights through expert advice, technical assistance, cooperation and building up the necessary human rights infrastructures;

(b) To ensure preventive action in the field of human rights and to assist, as appropriate, the preventive diplomacy of the Secretary-General;

(c) To develop a comprehensive United Nations system-wide strategy for the implementation of the right to development and through concerted efforts to ensure recognition of economic, social and cultural rights at the national, regional and international levels;

(d) To define United Nations system policy in the field of human rights with regard to cooperation with regional organizations active in the field of human rights and international and regional development and financial institutions. Cooperation with those organizations aims at complementarity of action and the achievement whenever possible of common objectives and policies;

(e) To define United Nations policy with regard to national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. In that connection, the necessary contacts with existing human rights national commissions throughout the world will be developed and strengthened;

(f) To maintain contact at the highest level in order to coordinate human rights matters and seek to achieve a coherent approach in the implementation of human rights policies by United Nations officials, as well as by the various United Nations agencies and programmes or funds having significant human

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rights-related activities. Consultations and cooperation will be further developed or strengthened with UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, ILO, UNESCO and WHO, and all United Nations financial institutions and regional commissions as appropriate, in order to review policy issues in the field of human rights, the level and degree of cooperation and possible joint action or priority concerns;

(g) To contribute to the implementation of the appropriate recommendations of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on human rights matters;

(h) To seek the cooperation of non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the media in enhancing international cooperation for human rights, particularly in the area of human rights education and information, not least in view of the decade for human rights education to be launched in December 1994;

(i) To provide direction and priority of action to advisory services and technical and financial assistance programmes in the field of human rights through the Centre for Human Rights and other appropriate institutions; to coordinate the development of comprehensive United Nations programme of assistance in the field of human rights;

(j) To develop policy analysis and policy initiatives with respect to international cooperation in the field of human rights within and outside the United Nations system;

(k) To provide direction and priority of action for the implementation of the human rights objectives in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and to report annually to the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly on the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action.

SUBPROGRAMME 2. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

(a) Objectives

35.27 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 2106 A (XX), 2200 A (XXI), 2443 (XXII), 3068 (XXVIII), 33/173, 36/151, 39/46, 44/25, 44/128, 44/135 and 45/158, 47/111 and 48/121; and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

35.28 Strengthening the international legal framework for the promotion and protection of human rights was a fundamental concern of the World Conference on Human Rights and was reflected in its Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. It thus set universal acceptance of international human rights instruments as an important objective and called for concerted efforts to that end. The Conference also called for special attention to be given to achieving universal ratification in the 1998 review of progress made in implementation of the Vienna Declaration. The Conference further focused on specific instruments for particular attention and encouraged States to consider limiting the extent of reservation to international instruments, to formulate them as precisely and narrowly as possible and to review them regularly with a view to withdrawing them. It recommended that the Centre for Human Rights make available to States,

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upon request, assistance on specific human rights issues, including the preparation of reports under human rights treaties.

35.29 The World Conference stressed the importance of further concrete action within the framework of the United Nations with a view to providing assistance to victims of torture.

35.30 The objectives of subprogramme 2 are:

(a) To ensure continuing implementation of international norms and treaties in the field of human rights, including:

- (i) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;
- (ii) The International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- (iii) The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;
- (iv) The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- (v) The Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- (vi) The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, after its entry into force;
- (vii) Such other conventions dealing with human rights as may be adopted by the United Nations;

(b) To respond to the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action concerning the strengthening of the international legal framework for the promotion and protection of human rights;

(c) To improve the functioning of treaty bodies, including their monitoring tasks.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.31 The activities of the Secretariat are, in the first place, determined by the relevant conventions themselves and by the mandates entrusted to the Secretariat by treaty bodies, particularly with regard to the procedures for examination of reports. These include country analyses, lists of issues, draft conclusions and recommendations, and draft annual reports. Other means of action include the encouragement of further ratifications or accessions to the international instruments on human rights, as recommended by the Vienna

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Declaration and Programme of Action, the enhancement and deepening of the dialogue between the States parties to those instruments and the relevant monitoring bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee against Torture and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the future Committee on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Group of Three on Apartheid; the promotion of further exchanges of experience among Governments on the application of international instruments and standards; and the improvement of United Nations procedures for monitoring States' compliance with their treaty obligations, particularly through the utilization of consolidated reporting guidelines and the computerization of the work relating to reporting of the treaty monitoring bodies.

35.32 The dissemination of information on international norms is emphasized as an integral part of the efforts to promote the application of international norms. To that end, regional and subregional meetings are organized with a view to familiarizing appropriate officials with the contents of the treaties, encouraging ratification and identifying and resolving obstacles preventing ratification or compliance with treaty obligations. Regional and subregional meetings are also organized to train government officials from States parties to human rights instruments in the preparation of state reports to treaty bodies.

35.33 The Convention against Torture is the only human rights instrument that provides for an inquiry procedure. The Secretariat assists the Committee against Torture in its confidential inquiries by gathering and analysing information received, preparing and conducting missions in the field and preparing reports and summaries of the findings.

35.34 The implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is posing a new and in some ways different challenge to the United Nations. In accordance with the Convention, information and expert advice has been mobilized from many different sources, such as specialized agencies, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations, to support the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. For the first time in the annals of the United Nations, a treaty body is charged with promoting all the human rights of a specific group - the children of the world - and is assisting in bringing about real changes in the way they live. New and imaginative methods of turning international norms into national realities are being developed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in particular by following up its recommendations to States parties and holding regional meetings.

35.35 Furthermore, the recent establishment of new treaty bodies requires an increased coordination of activities to improve their functioning. As recommended in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, human rights treaty bodies, biennial meetings of chairpersons of the treaty bodies and meetings of States parties to human rights instruments continue, with the assistance of the Secretariat, to take steps aimed at coordinating the multiple reporting requirements and guidelines for preparing state reports under human rights instruments.

SUBPROGRAMME 3: FACT-FINDING AND SPECIAL PROCEDURES

(a) Objectives

35.36 The basic legislative authority for this subprogramme is contained in Articles 1, 13, 55 and 56 of the Charter of the United Nations; in Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I), 9 (II), and 1235 (XLII); and in Commission on Human Rights resolution 8 (XXIII). Reference is also made to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (in particular, Part I, para. 23, and Part II, paras. 55 to 62 and 95 to 97) and to a great number of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights establishing the mandates for each individual procedure or mechanism. Reference is also made to General Assembly resolution 48/141 establishing the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

35.37 The United Nations has promulgated a significant number of conventions and declarations on human rights. There remains a gap, however, between those internationally recognized norms and their application, and, in some situations, there is an urgent need to protect individuals and groups against serious violations of human rights and to promote the application of existing international norms through fact-finding, investigations, continuous field monitoring and public reporting thereon.

35.38 The overall objective of subprogramme 3 is to render the international human rights norms more operative. In that regard, policy-making organs, the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, when considering situations of alleged violations of human rights in certain countries or territories, require objective factual information and analyses so as to be able to enter into constructive dialogues with Governments and to seek their cooperation with regard to concrete situations, incidents and individual cases, with a view to examining and investigating them in an objective manner and to recommending solutions to overcome problems of securing respect for human rights. When there is still a possibility of preventing violations to the rights to life, physical and mental integrity and security of persons, various urgent action procedures are resorted to on a regular basis. This, together with the ability of the special procedures system to intercede with Governments on the highest level and to generate, through public reporting, effective responses by the international community, constitute major tools in the efforts aimed at increased international human rights protection.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.39 In order to meet the objectives stated above, policy-making organs have created a number of extra-conventional procedures and mechanisms (special procedures) to carry out fact-finding and investigations into reported situations and cases, either through an issue-oriented or country-oriented approach. Such fact-finding or investigatory mandates are usually entrusted to qualified independent experts (special rapporteurs/representatives/experts or working groups) or, in certain cases, to the Secretary-General. In recent years the number and scope of such procedures and mechanisms has been enlarged

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considerably and their mandates have been broadened and amplified, including through the establishment of field monitoring operations.

35.40 The special procedures system comprises the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs in the Occupied Territories, the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, special rapporteurs/representatives on thematic issues, special rapporteurs/representatives on country situations and other mandates dealing with violations conferred directly to the Secretary-General. It also comprises two continuous field monitoring operations (in the territory of the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda), as well as periodic field monitoring (concerning the situation in Iraq).

35.41 The strategies pursued in conducting fact-finding or investigatory exercises in the framework of the special procedures system are essentially aimed at establishing a dialogue with Governments and other interested parties with a view to clarifying allegations of human rights violations, investigating reported incidents and cases, preventing further violations and improving human rights protection worldwide. More specifically, the mandates given by policy-making organs for each procedure or mechanism determine the scope of action considered appropriate for each situation or phenomenon.

35.42 Field missions are an essential tool of the special procedures system in order to gain insight into the objective reality of the situation. In the coming years attention will be paid to improving access to primary sources of information and ensuring subsequent verification. Policy-making organs have decided that particularly critical situations should be monitored in a continuous fashion and important precedents have been set with the establishment of field monitoring operations under the special procedures system, such as those decided upon by the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights regarding the situation in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Rwanda.

35.43 Under this subprogramme, staff in the Centre will not only prepare for and participate in field missions and monitoring operations but also ensure that there is the necessary follow-up to such missions as well as various intercessions by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, special rapporteurs and working groups. Possibilities for joint missions in relation to several relevant procedures will be pursued whenever feasible and appropriate. The Centre will further make all organizational and substantive arrangements for annual meetings of special rapporteurs and chairmen of working groups in order to harmonize strategies and activities and to improve coordination of missions and of reporting. Coordination will also be enhanced between the special procedures and treaty-based human rights bodies and between the special procedures and the larger United Nations system.

35.44 The World Conference on Human Rights further recommended that in assuming a more active role in the promotion and protection of human rights, particular attention will be given to ensuring full respect for international humanitarian law in all situations of armed conflict. In addition, the World Conference, recognizing the important role of human rights components in arrangements

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concerning some peace-keeping operations by the United Nations, recommended that the Secretary-General take into account the reporting, experience and capabilities of the Centre for Human Rights and human rights mechanisms. In that regard the Centre, under this subprogramme, will strengthen its capacity to conceptualize and carry out human rights verification missions decided upon in situations of armed conflict and of post-conflict peace-building processes, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations departments, agencies and programmes.

35.45 In connection with the responsibility conferred upon the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for, *inter alia*, early warning and preventive action, there are close linkages between those mandates and the special procedures system. With regard to the mandate of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the findings of special procedures, rapporteurs and experts will also serve as a basis for his dialogue with Governments. In that respect, the High Commissioner will also play an important role in the process of follow-up to recommendations made in the framework of the special procedures system, their review and the evaluation of policies and programmes based on those recommendations.

SUBPROGRAMME 4: PETITIONS AND APPEALS

(a) Objectives

35.46 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 277 (X), 474 A (XV), 728 F (XXVIII), 1235 (XLII), 1503 (XLVIII) and 1990/41; Commission on Human Rights resolution 8 (XXIII); General Assembly resolutions 2106 A (XX), 2200 A (XXI), 39/46, 45/158, 48/121 and 48/141; and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

35.47 As reflected in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights, expressing grave concern about continuing human rights violations in all parts of the world and dismay that gross and systematic violations of human rights continued to occur in different parts of the world, recommended that the United Nations assume a more active role in the promotion and protection of human rights. The right of individuals, groups and non-governmental organizations to address their human rights concerns to the United Nations (in the form of complaints, appeals or petitions) under various confidential procedures, governed either by resolutions of policy-making organs or by international treaties, constitutes an important part of the protection mechanism of the Organization.

35.48 The objective of subprogramme 4 is to ensure the full and effective implementation of the right to petition the United Nations and to ensure that recourse procedures function effectively and provide the intended protection and remedy to victims of violations of human rights. Additionally, thousands of individuals address themselves annually to the United Nations, drawing attention to difficulties they are encountering and that cannot be dealt with under existing procedures, and seeking United Nations advice, assistance or intercession. It is also the objective of the subprogramme to ensure prompt and effective reaction to such humanitarian appeals. As requested by the Secretary-General, within the framework of preventive diplomacy, and as mandated

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by policy-making organs, the subprogramme also seeks to ensure the effective carrying out of confidential studies and fact-finding missions aimed at preventing human rights violations or the continuation of human rights violations and alleviating human suffering.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.49 Under the procedure governed mainly by Economic and Social Council resolutions 728 F (XXVIII) and 1503 (XLVIII), the Secretariat replies to and summarizes yearly tens of thousands of communications and renders substantive service, including the preparation of all confidential documentation, to the closed meetings of the implementing bodies, the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and its Working Group on Communications, and the Commission on Human Rights and its Working Group on Situations. It also services independent experts appointed by the Commission or by the Secretary-General to conduct fact-finding missions and to report thereon within the framework of the procedure.

35.50 Under the treaty-based procedures for examination of individual complaints, the Secretariat corresponds with the petitioners and the States parties, prepares detailed fact sheets on the submissions of the parties, analyses the legal issues involved, drafts all recommendations and draft decisions for adoption by the treaty bodies and presents the cases to them. The decisions taken by the treaty bodies thereafter constitute the jurisprudence or case law in international human rights law. The substantive service rendered to the treaty bodies concerned, the Human Rights Committee, its Working Group on Communications and the Special Rapporteur for New Cases (procedure governed by the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), the Committee against Torture (procedure governed by article 22 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) and the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (procedure governed by article 14 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination), includes the preparation of all confidential documentation issued under the procedures in question. A similar procedure, governed by article 77 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, is expected to enter into force during the period covered by the medium-term plan. Similar functions will be carried out in respect of that procedure.

35.51 In view of the emphasis placed in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on the need for continuing adaptation of the United Nations human rights machinery to meet current and future needs in the promotion and protection of human rights and the necessity to harmonize and rationalize existing procedures and mechanisms, secretariat action will focus increasingly on possible ways and means to streamline and improve existing protection and monitoring mechanisms, including all confidential procedures for dealing with complaints. It is envisaged that a detailed report will be prepared on those issues.

35.52 In the light of the recommendation of the World Conference that other ways be considered to respond to acute violations of human rights, it is envisaged that preventive diplomacy and dialogue with Governments at the

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initiative of the Secretary-General will become a more frequently used tool aimed at preventing violations and putting an end to massive and flagrant violations of human rights. A number of fact-finding missions, conducted within the framework of preventive diplomacy, have taken place under the subprogramme. In that context, increased emphasis will also be placed on assisting the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the mandate given to him to play an active role in removing current obstacles in the full realization of all human rights and in preventing the continuation of human rights violations in all parts of the world.

SUBPROGRAMME 5. LEGISLATION AND PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND RESEARCH, AND STANDARD SETTING

(a) Objectives

35.53 The legislative authority derives from General Assembly resolutions 1904 (XVIII), 2106 A (XX), 2541 (XXIV), 3068 (XXVIII), 3218 (XXIX), 36/55, 38/14, 41/120, 46/203, 47/135, 48/91, 48/121, 48/141, 48/166, 48/130 and 48/134; Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I), 9 (II) and 1235 (XLII); report of the fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights (E/1371, para. 13); and Commission resolutions 8 (XXIII), 13 (XXXII) and 17 (XXXVII), 1993/19, 1993/20, 1993/22 and 1994/25.

35.54 The commitment to human dignity and equality and to non-discrimination is one of the pillars of United Nations human rights policy. Yet many persons are denied effective enjoyment of basic human rights through discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, language or religion or because they belong to particularly disadvantaged groups. In some cases discrimination is overt. The situation of areas where discrimination is a component of law and social policy will have to be monitored in their transition to democracy. In other cases discrimination is covert, often constituting an invidious part of society that can even go unnoticed by many. In addition, many are denied full enjoyment of their human rights and suffer various forms of exclusion because they belong to particularly disadvantaged groups or sectors of society. Discrimination is intolerable in itself and a source of tensions, conflicts and strife as human beings demand respect for their inherent dignity. The very existence of discrimination is a serious threat to the universal enjoyment of human rights and to the objectives of the United Nations in promoting economic and social development and international peace and security.

35.55 In a fast-changing and increasingly interdependent world, societies are constantly confronted with new problems whose human rights aspects need to be addressed. United Nations policy-making organs are mandating new areas for research. These can be on specific aspects of already well-established rights or on emerging problems with relatively unexplored human rights dimensions. In addition, United Nations human rights organs periodically review the achievements of the human rights programme and the areas that need to be strengthened, and discuss directives for future activities. Certain areas of priority are identified for continuous review in order to ascertain whether international standards are being respected, to identify emerging problems and to determine whether new standards or mechanisms are needed. This, in turn, necessitates the preparation of reports, research, the analysis and evaluation

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of information, and the conduct of mandated dialogues with Governments. Once human rights problems have been identified, the response of the international community is to develop norms, standards and the appropriate machinery for monitoring and implementation.

35.56 Accordingly, the objectives of subprogramme 5 are to contribute to efforts for the elimination and prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and vulnerable groups.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.57 The expansion and implementation of United Nations programmes and plans of action against discrimination and for tolerance will underlie the action of the Secretariat. This will include the application of the Programme of Action of the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, activities aimed at putting an end to discrimination and racism, the efforts concerning the rights of migrant workers and their families, and the work regarding the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and indigenous populations.

35.58 The causes and conditions leading to racism and intolerance will increasingly be the focus of research, as will new and emerging forms of discrimination. This will lead to the development of legislative and social tools better adapted to the fight against discrimination. Attention will be centred on developing models for the establishment of national institutions promoting tolerance and fighting discrimination, and on preparing model national laws against discrimination. Account will be taken of the results of 50 years' experience in the fight against racism and racial discrimination in order to identify achievements and failures, set guidelines for the future and develop new approaches for the elimination of age-old and emerging forms of discrimination.

35.59 In undertaking the implementation of the programme against racism, substantive contributions will be called for from agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, high-level focal points will be identified and the capacity and experience of non-governmental organizations will be fully utilized.

35.60 In addition, basic research will continue into such domains as the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, economic, social and cultural rights, the interrelated nature of respect for the various human rights, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to a fair trial, impunity of perpetrators of violations of human rights, detained juveniles, national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, child labour and new contemporary forms of slavery. Research is being expanded into new areas such as the human rights aspect of bio-medical technology, discrimination against HIV-infected persons or people with AIDS, human rights and disability, and the new international humanitarian order, and on those issues having an impact on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the external debt and readjustment policies, toxic waste and chemical weapons. Broad questions, such as the interrelationship between peace and human rights, participation and democratization, including periodic and genuine elections, are also the subject

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of studies. The question of respect for human rights in the administration of justice and during states of emergency receives continued emphasis. In that area, new standards will emerge relating to the declaration and to the application of states of emergency and respect for human rights, in particular, with regard to non-derogable rights. As a result of the above activities, certain services are needed to assist the human rights organs concerned in performing their tasks. Such assistance would include the collection and analysis of material related to the various human rights issues of the subprogramme in the form of reports for the special rapporteurs at the request of the Commission on freedom of opinion and expression, sale of children, mercenaries, and on religious intolerance and of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on the right to a fair trial, impunity, states of emergency, compensation of victims, human rights and international peace; and reports on behalf of the Secretary-General requested by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission.

35.61 Standard setting will continue as mandated by policy-making organs. The Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992, needs to be followed up. Such subjects as enforced or involuntary disappearances, the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms and the right to leave any country and to return to one's own country can be expected to be dealt with by standard setting. New areas will evolve from the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development. The Commission on Human Rights has already identified standard-setting projects regarding the rights of indigenous people, torture and children. Other topics for standard setting will emerge from research work.

35.62 The basic challenge to the Organization in the field of research, studies and standard setting in human rights in the next decade will be to deal successfully with a growing range of interrelated and complex issues. Research and studies will be built upon a concerted effort of reflection by Governments, non-governmental organizations, experts and the academic community. Planning and coordination within the Secretariat will be improved so as to avoid duplication. The research and reference facilities of the Centre for Human Rights will be gradually developed in cooperation with the library and documentation services of the Secretariat. The research tasks relating to the activities of the United Nations in human rights over the past 40 years, as well as the detailed and extensive information submitted to the United Nations, make it imperative to establish a computerized United Nations human rights database and information network. The database will be updated continuously and made accessible, as appropriate, to Governments, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the media through an electronic information network of the United Nations in human rights.

SUBPROGRAMME 6. TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICES AND PUBLICATIONS

(a) Objectives

35.63 The legislative authority for the subprogramme derives from General Assembly resolutions 217 D (III), paragraph 2; 795 (VIII), paragraph 2; 926 (X); 1905 (XVIII), paragraphs 2 and 6; 32/127, paragraph 2; 41/121; 41/129; 41/130; 41/154; 42/118; 43/90; 43/128; 44/61; 44/64; 45/99; 46/124; 46/203; 48/121; and 48/141; Economic and Social Council resolutions 5 (I); 9 (II); 1793 (LIV), paragraphs 2, 3, 5 and 6; and 1923 (LVIII), paragraphs 1 and 2; and decisions 146 (XL), paragraph (b); 1978/14; and 1987/147; and Commission on Human Rights resolutions 17 (XXIII), paragraph 5 (b); 7 (XXXII), paragraph 2; 1986/54; 1987/37 to 1987/39; 1988/74; 1989/53; 1990/58; 1990/59; 1991/49; 1991/50; 1992/51; 1992/80; 1993/87; and 1994/69.

35.64 The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action identified key concerns and areas of priority within the advisory services and technical assistance programme. The mutually reinforcing interrelationship between development, democracy and human rights must be implemented at national and international levels. Therefore, coherent and comprehensive plans of action at the national level, which would integrate all activities within the framework of advisory services and technical assistance, are to be provided at the request of Governments. The strengthening of regional and subregional arrangements, as well as the assignment of regional and subregional human rights officers, are also areas of concern within the subprogramme.

35.65 Advisory services and technical assistance will be provided at the request of Governments and, where appropriate, regional human rights organizations. Assistance will also be provided in the conduct of elections, in particular with regard to the human rights aspects of elections and public information about elections. Training courses, expert advice or opportunities for the exchange of information or experience through national, regional or international workshops are often useful for government officials dealing with human rights questions, administrators of justice and law enforcement officials. Training of United Nations human rights and humanitarian personnel and of international civil servants is essential in assisting these target groups to recognize and deal with human rights violations and eliminate gender bias.

35.66 Without adequate public understanding or support, the activities of the United Nations for the promotion and protection of human rights cannot realize their potential. Such understanding should be enhanced by all means available, including workshops and publications, as well as the establishment of national centres for documentation and training in the field of human rights.

35.67 The objectives of subprogramme 6 are:

(a) To provide support for international cooperation aimed at building up and strengthening national and regional institutions and infrastructures that will have a long-term impact on improved implementation of international instruments on human rights and to make additional efforts to promote ratification of international instruments on human rights;

(b) To provide practical training and opportunities for exchange of information and experience to government officials or other persons whose functions are related to the promotion and protection of human rights;

(c) To provide expert and technical cooperation in the field of human rights to Governments, at their request;

(d) To increase public awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms, taking into account in particular the human rights of women;

(e) To enhance awareness of activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights.

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

35.68 During the period covered by the medium-term plan, priority action will be taken to ensure that all Governments, as well as relevant regional organizations, are fully and systematically informed of all activities, present and future, carried out within the advisory services and technical assistance programme. Critical evaluations of completed, as well as of ongoing programmes will be carried out regularly.

35.69 Efforts will be further enhanced to provide Governments, at their request, with advisory services and technical assistance, for instance, in building up or strengthening national institutions, strengthening the administration and justice, developing national laws in keeping with international standards and strengthening national institutions, systems and infrastructures for the ratification and implementation of human rights instruments, for the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as in incorporating the human rights component in an integrated approach to development strategies. Special attention will be given to requests in the field of human rights in those countries which have experienced problems in the implementation of human rights standards. In that connection, specific training courses will be provided for government officials dealing with the preparation and presentation of national reports to human rights supervisory bodies.

35.70 In that regard, it may be expected that more national, regional and subregional workshops and training courses will be organized for administrators of justice and government officials engaged in the implementation of international instruments on human rights and that more countries in all regions of the world will develop forms of cooperation and assistance with the Centre for Human Rights, in keeping with their specific needs. In cases where the Centre is called upon to service investigations into allegations of human rights violations as called for by the competent legislative bodies, advisory services and technical assistance can complement those activities. Regional and subregional workshops and seminars and exchanges of information designed to strengthen regional arrangements will also be organized. In addition, training materials will be developed, in particular a manual for the training of international civil servants on human rights, including gender sensitivity. Other training material will be developed for use in specific training activities focusing on peace-keeping, peacemaking and humanitarian and relief operations. Training will also be provided for United Nations human rights and

humanitarian relief personnel to assist them in recognizing and dealing with human rights abuses perpetrated in particular against women and to carry out their work without gender bias.

35.71 Within the framework of the activities for the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights, efforts will be made to strengthen relations and cooperation with the United Nations bodies concerned and with the media, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions so as to inform people worldwide of the goals and activities of the United Nations in that sector and also to draw upon their support and assistance for the universal realization of human rights. The Centre will coordinate a programme of activities, including the holding of workshops, the publication and distribution of information and reference materials, in all regions of the world in order to inform, educate and generate public understanding and support for the objectives of the United Nations in the field of human rights. This will be done in close cooperation with the Department of Public Information, other entities of the United Nations system and the wider human rights community. Priority will be given to publications for use in technical cooperation projects, such as specialized manuals for the training of police, lawyers and judges, and election and social workers. Emphasis will also be put on other publications, such as the fact sheet series, focusing on priority issues such as rights of the child, indigenous populations and child exploitation.

35.72 The dissemination of information on human rights will continue to place emphasis on the reproduction of the texts of the international instruments, norms and standards on human rights in as many languages as possible and on making the translated texts widely available.

35.73 During the medium-term plan period, more assistance will be provided to Member States for activities aimed at building up or strengthening national and regional institutions playing a catalytic role in order to develop or strengthen the necessary regional institutions or national infrastructures responsible for promoting and protecting human rights. Training and other supportive activities will continue to be used to provide the necessary basic information and knowledge needed in institution-building and for the widest possible implementation of human rights instruments.

35.74 Thus, the United Nations will contribute to the promotion of a universal culture of human rights. It will do so by increasing the awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms and by assisting in the establishment or strengthening of national infrastructures for the protection and promotion of human rights.



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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VII. HUMAN RIGHTS, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Programme 36. International protection of and assistance to refugees

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.
2. Regulation 3.11 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.
3. The revisions proposed below modify the relevant parts of the narrative of programme 36, International protection of and assistance to refugees, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and subsequently revised by the Assembly in its resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and issued in document A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.
4. The following text modifies paragraphs 36.3, 36.8, 36.17, 36.23, 36.40, 36.41 and 36.47 of A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

A. Programme

1. General orientation

Paragraph 36.3

Replace the second sentence with the following: "Most recently, at its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted decision 48/307 of 4 November 1993, by which the term of office of the High Commissioner was extended for a further five-year period, from 1 January 1994 to 31 December 1998."

Paragraph 36.8

In the second sentence, after "most recently", replace the existing text with the following: "resolution 48/116 of 20 December 1993, other relevant resolutions adopted in recent years are resolutions 41/70 of 3 December 1986, endorsing the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on International Cooperation to Avert New Flows of Refugees; 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 47/168 of 22 December 1992 and 48/7 of 14 December 1993, on strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations; 41/122 of 4 December 1986 and 42/107 of 7 December 1987, on the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa; 44/136 of 15 December 1989 and 45/137 of 14 December 1990, on the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa; 46/108 of 16 December 1991, 47/107 of 16 December 1992 and 48/118 of 20 December 1993 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa; 42/110 of 7 December 1987, on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons of Central America; 43/118 of 8 December 1988, 46/107 of 16 December 1991, 47/103 of 16 December 1992 and 48/117 of 20 December 1993, on the International Conference on Central American Refugees; 43/119 of 8 December 1988 and 44/138 of 15 December 1989, on the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees; 48/114 of 20 December 1993, on emergency international assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan; and 48/113 of 20 December 1993, on the convening of a United Nations conference for the comprehensive consideration and review of the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants."

2. Overall strategy

Paragraph 36.17

Replace paragraph 36.17 with the following:

"36.17 The financing of the activities of UNHCR relies primarily on voluntary contributions. In 1993, the Office's total expenditure financed by voluntary contributions amounted to \$1.3 billion."

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B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES
OR OTHERWISE BENEFITING REFUGEES

Paragraph 36.23 Replace the first sentence with the following: "The number of States that have acceded to the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees has steadily increased over the years to reach 126 as at 20 April 1994."

SUBPROGRAMME 4. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RELIEF, CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Paragraph 36.40 Replace the third sentence with the following: "In 1993, new emergencies in Africa, Asia and the Middle East have brought the number of people of concern to UNHCR to some 23 million people."

Paragraph 36.41 Replace paragraph 36.41 with the following:

"36.41 In the field of care and maintenance, in 1993 UNHCR was implementing large programmes in Ethiopia, Malawi, Guinea, Kenya and most notably in the former Yugoslavia. In south-west Asia, care and maintenance assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan remained the largest in the region. Included in the programme is a substantial component of income-generating and self-sufficiency activities. South-east Asia was also a major focus of UNHCR care and maintenance programmes in 1993; a major programme for refugees from Myanmar was implemented in Bangladesh. In Hong Kong, a large programme continues to be implemented for Vietnamese asylum-seekers. The Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed to at the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees, held in June 1989, remains the framework for the solution to this case-load of Vietnamese asylum-seekers.

SUBPROGRAMME 5. DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Paragraph 36.47 Replace the last sentence with the following: "In 1993, the Office registered 43,760 refugees targeted for resettlement."



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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VII. HUMAN RIGHTS, FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Programme 37. Emergency humanitarian assistance

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.
2. Regulation 3.11 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.
3. The revisions proposed below modify paragraphs 37.15, 37.24, 37.26, 37.36, 37.41, 37.47 and 37.49 of programme 37, Emergency humanitarian assistance, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and subsequently revised by the Assembly in its resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and issued in document A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.
4. There is no specialized intergovernmental or expert body responsible for reviewing the revisions proposed under this programme.

A. Programme

2. Overall strategy

Paragraph 37.15

At the end of the paragraph, add "In order to set the stage for sustainable social, political and economic development, the Department, through its operational partners, will develop and implement, within the overall context of its comprehensive humanitarian efforts, specific measures to support post-conflict nation-building, in accordance with the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General in the agenda for peace and the agenda for development."

B. Subprogrammes

SUBPROGRAMME 1. POLICY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

(a) Objectives

Paragraph 37.24

Amend the paragraph as follows (deletions are in brackets and additions are underlined):

"37.24 The subprogramme will involve primarily the planning, development and evaluation of the activities undertaken by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in fulfilment of its mandate. This includes [applied research and continuous monitoring on the various assignments and functions] monitoring the overall activities of the Department in New York and Geneva to ensure [that] effective coordination and programme implementation with regard to ongoing humanitarian emergencies [are effectively undertaken]. This would include evaluating the impact of emergency activities, drawing conclusions and identifying lessons learnt for application in other situations. This would also require the identification of new issues that need to be addressed and ensuring that the Department, as well as the appropriate inter-agency mechanisms, are appropriately engaged. Given the increasing number of situations where humanitarian operations work closely with other United Nations activities, there is a need for elaboration of the interrelationship between humanitarian assistance and peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building. These considerations are closely linked to the active exercise of humanitarian diplomacy, to early warning and monitoring, and to the examination of the link between relief, rehabilitation and long-term socio-economic development, and to key elements of post-conflict rebuilding of societies through actions such as mine clearance, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, and the resettlement of displaced persons and refugees. The subprogramme will connect these specific

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aspects of coordination of humanitarian assistance with a constant attempt to view the tasks of the Department in the context of overall development in the global system as far as the political, economic, social, ecological and technological dimensions are concerned."

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

Paragraph 37.26 After the second sentence insert "In addition, as focal point for United Nations activities in mine clearance, the Department will coordinate and monitor activities of the United Nations and of the organizations of the system in this regard. Another aspect of post-conflict humanitarian action will involve demobilization following armed conflict and resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees. This will involve the formulation of policy guidelines, allocation of responsibilities among the organizations of the system, coordination and resource mobilization for such activities."

SUBPROGRAMME 2. DISASTER PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

Paragraph 37.36 Beginning on the eleventh line, delete "as well as those which will be carried out in close association with the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,".

SUBPROGRAMME 3. EMERGENCY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

Paragraph 37.41 At the end of subparagraph (b), add "There will be close interaction between the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure a constant exchange of information between humanitarian assistance units in the field and the headquarters of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs".

SUBPROGRAMME 4. DISASTER RELIEF

(b) Course of action of the Secretariat

Paragraph 37.47 Add a new subparagraph (h):

"(h) Addressing new tasks in relation to the coordination of response to environmental disasters, in close cooperation with UNEP, as well as technological accidents and activities related to mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster."

SUBPROGRAMME 5. COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES

(b) Objectives

Paragraph 37.49

At the end of the paragraph, add: "In accordance with those guiding principles and General Assembly resolution 48/57, the subprogramme addresses issues related to providing timely, prompt and effective humanitarian aid."



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PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1992-1997

MAJOR PROGRAMME VIII. PUBLIC INFORMATION

Programme 38. Public information

1. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and its revisions are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

2. Regulation 3.11 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs or international conferences since the adoption of the plan.

3. The revisions proposed below modify the relevant parts of the narrative of programme 38, Public information, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, which was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and subsequently revised by the Assembly in its resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992 and issued in document A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

4. Following the elimination of apartheid and the laying of foundations for a new, non-racial and democratic South Africa, the General Assembly, in its resolution 48/258 A of 23 June 1994, decided to terminate the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid and to remove from the provisional agenda of the forty-ninth session the item entitled "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa". Accordingly, the revisions reflect the provisions of resolution 48/258 A with regard to programme 38.

5. The following text modifies paragraph 38.11 of A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

B. Subprogrammes

Paragraph 38.11

In subparagraph (b), replace "The struggle against apartheid, and the question of Palestine" with "The question of Palestine, self-determination and decolonization".

Delete subparagraph (c) and renumber the remaining subparagraphs accordingly.
